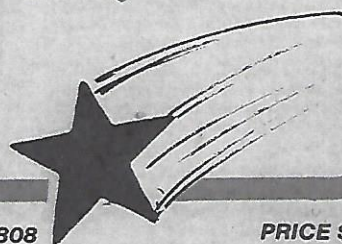




SOCCER STAR



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AROK SHOCK



FRANK AROK... his national coaching job could be on the line.

Overseas reports suggest his job is on the line

By LES SHORROCK

IS Socceroo coach Frank Arok in danger of losing his job?

Recent reports from overseas suggest that he is on his way out.

Arok's contract expires in five week's time and he is worried at stories circulating in Europe that he is due to be replaced by Tomislav Ivic, coach of current European champion, Porto.

Although he has been reassured by ASF Executive Director, Mr Brian Emery, who described the reports as 'ridiculous', Arok says he still

feels his job is under threat.

Mr Emery thinks that the rumours have started because a Melbourne club was seeking a Yugoslav coach and overseas newspapers have confused the national job with a club.

But Arok says that explanation is too ridiculous for words, adding that no Melbourne club could possibly afford a man of Ivic's stature.

"He is one of the world's leading coaches, and the most successful one in 1987, and is too important for anyone to even consider approaching him

for an Australian club job," he says.

If Arok goes, and his successor isn't Ivic, could it be Eddie Thomson?

Thomson has been waiting patiently in the wings for long enough, and it is no secret that several members of the Executive would prefer him to Arok.

There are those who think that Arok wears too many hats; he is manager and coach of St. George, and it is this faction that recently suggested that the national coaching job should be a full-time job.

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Don't miss Thursday's big action-packed Star

WITH the zeal of the newly-converted, Steve Speziale paints a rosy picture of clubs building stands with seats under cover, and having their public relations handled by full-time administrators who will feed a constant flow of news to the hungry media.

It's all part of the five-year plan you see, and never mind the previous 11 years of chop and change which have seen the NSL's standards slip farther and farther back.

I'd just love to see it all come about, but I have to play the Devil's Advocate and say I've heard it all before, with bells on.

I've lost count of the number of times I've gone along to hear some marketing guru explain to us open-mouthed peasantry how he was going to revolutionise the game and bring back the fans.

The fans didn't come back, and the gurus didn't stay either — they took the up-front money and left for greener pastures.

And it's funny how all these plans to improve the game centre on spending more money.

Speziale says: "Each year the League clubs put millions of dollars into the game... We must recognise that we are in the BUSINESS of soccer."

What he should say is: "We are in the business of SPENDING money."

Besides his own well-paid job, the clubs are now to be saddled with another \$25,000 each for a full-time administrator who besides being head cook and bottle-washer, is going to ensure more exposure in the "mainstream" media.

How is this person going to achieve this miracle when soccer journalists employed by these papers can't get enough space, no matter how they try?

Instead of trying unsuccessfully to win over sports editors of the big dailies, Speziale could do a more useful job helping we willing hacks.

THE NSL

IS IT ALL A WASTE OF TIME?



By
LES SHORROCK

For instance, before making Preston Makedonia spend a million dollars or so installing 3000 seats, maybe he could persuade them to spend \$50 to cut a gate in the fence around the playing arena so that I don't have to climb it to reach the Press box.

Last time I phoned through a match report from Connor Reserve I almost left a vital piece of my anatomy on the top strand of the fence.

Also he could do a lot to ensure that coaches are available to talk to the Press.

For instance, after the Buffalo Cup semi-final I went along to the South dressing room,

hoping to speak to Brian Garvey, Paul Foster and David Healy.

But the door was locked, with a group of well-wishers waiting patiently for admittance. I knocked on the door, it opened slightly but when Harry the doorman saw me, it slammed shut again.

Now, I have no wish to intrude where I am not wanted, but surely to God arrangements could be made for the coach to speak to the Press in an adjoining room. Any soccer journalist in this town will tell you that his biggest hassle is the way that coaches make themselves unavailable.

Of the six NSL coaches in Melbourne, three are as hard to talk to as a Trappist monk and one hardly speaks a word of English.

It is in these areas Mr Speziale, that a lot of improvement could be achieved without spending money.

As for bringing back the missing fans, 3000 seats won't do the trick, even if they are under cover. Only class players, playing attractive soccer, will do that.

Juventus played in Australia's best stadium last season but still was struggling to attract more than a thousand spectators, while Footscray, playing at a ground that's about as comfortable as a prisoner-of-war camp, often attracted 3000.

And that was because, rightly or wrongly, spectators had made up their minds that Footscray was attractive and Juventus was not.

When you consider that Juventus paid \$28,000 affiliation fee to play before tiny attendances that didn't bring in enough money to pay the ground rent, you have to ask yourself the 64 dollar question... how much longer can Australian soccer afford the NSL?



TEAM ENTRIES SEASON 1988

Applications for membership in season 1988 are invited.

Single-team or multi-team clubs welcome.

Sunday competition, morning or afternoon.

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Tommy should ring the Park bell

FOUR months ago Bell Park won its way into the hearts of the soccer public with a giant-killing act which carried it into the final of the Victorian League Cup.

Although Park lost the final to first division side Albion Turku Gucu by the only goal of the game, the run established the Geelong side as season-cup campaigners.

With this in mind,

player-coach George Watters is quietly confident that his team can carry off the Geelong Advertiser Cup, especially as it is being played on Park's home ground.

The Batesford side won the tournament on its home turf in 1981, but has failed to impress in the tournament since.

But now, with the signing of ex-Socceroo

Tommy Cumming from Green Gully hopes are high that Park will see its name engraved on the trophy once again.

Park has East Geelong, Corio-Geelong-United, and Brintons as its opponents in the Group A half of the draw and until the opening game on January 27 Watters if pressed, would have plumped for CGU as his biggest danger.

However he is breathing a little easier now, after Park's heart-stopping last-minute 1-0 win over CGU in the opening round.

The combine would probably rate itself a trifle unlucky, as it dominated play and had Park on the rack for long periods.

But it's goals, not pressure that wins matches, and with a draw looking a certainty, Park's midfielder Joe Tutone caught the CGU defence napping for once and scored the winner.

In the opening game of Group B, Geelong, although playing well below its best, was too methodical for a Western Victorian Association select and ran out the winner 1-0.

The Select managed to



● Tommy Cumming.

keep Geelong at bay for the first half, mainly because Geelong employed the wrong tactics, but after the break Geelong switched to utilising its wingers more and the move soon paid off.

Ten minutes into the half, Warren Stanaway crossed into the penalty area, where Craig Plummer nodded on to Mel Jones who headed the winner. After that, despite playing below its best, Geelong was able to hold out the select and ran out a comfortable winner.

— PAUL MILLAR

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DEBATE!

THE WEST END National Soccer League is at one of the most crucial stages of its growth.

We approach the early rounds of our 12th season with each of the six Melbourne-based clubs more aware of the job ahead of it.

My recent appointment as media and promotions manager helps to give the NSL a true identity in Melbourne. Instead of proclaiming: "It's about time," we should be saying: "Now let's get to work!"

Let's take a positive attitude towards the prospects of the NSL because negativity will kill any cause.

The Melbourne NSL clubs, I believe, have opened their eyes and broadened their views a little. It is essential that we stop treating the League as an annual event, rather we should work on a plan that spans three to five years, instead of just one.

There is a need for stability from players, coaches, club committees and most importantly the SUPPORTERS.

There are many issues to be covered as one appraises the past, present and future of soccer.

However, during the next year we'll work towards better communications with the mainstream, more professionalism at club level and gradual improvement.

Take club professionalism as a starting point.

The NSL Executive has directed each of

CLUBS NEED A FULL-TIME ADMINISTRATOR

its member clubs to appoint a full-time administrator during the 1988 season.

Some people have branded this as an unnecessarily expensive, but these are the people who would have us still believing that soccer on a national level should be run like a junior club at your local park.

Each year the League clubs put millions of dollars into the game. On this basis alone we must recognise that we are in the BUSINESS of soccer.

A full-time administrator would be able to handle the financial aspects of the club (both soccer and social) while also taking on the responsibilities of media and community liaison.

For far too long, soccer has tried to survive on the media exposure provided by the so-called ethnic media and the soccer journals.

While these outlets are as important as ever, we must look to gaining acceptance of our game in the mainstream media.



By
**STEVE
SPEZIALE**

We have to show our game to be one that demands a more generous coverage by television and radio sports and news services. This is easier said than done but remains a major priority of the NSL's Melbourne office.

Until this is achieved, we will put in place a network of designated media contacts at each club. The aim is to eventually generate news from club level and control its flow to the media.

Working with the clubs and the media are

high on our list of priorities but none is more important than giving the soccer fan on the terraces what he wants!

Now the season has started on a positive note with the players going for skill and not muscle.

And we are pleased to say that the need for higher minimum standards of ground facilities have been made clear to the clubs whose job it is to meet these requirements for the start of the 1989 season. An important clause in the requirements is the provision of more covered seating.

Our aim is to win back the supporters who have drifted away for whatever the reason, and also to attract a new generation of soccer supporter.

It must be painfully obvious to all who patronise the game nowadays that the people who used to pack Olympic and Middle Parks years ago are few in number today.

Soccer must mature and if it is not prepared to do it itself, then progress must be forced upon it.

Otherwise we will see other sports out-develop our game.

Just look at the success of the National Basketball League. It has gained big crowds (12,500 attended last year's play-off in Brisbane) and big sponsors.

This is a result of aggressive management and a development strategy that began NINE years ago!

That is the foresight and determination that we need in soccer because we have the raw material needed to build a great game in this country.

I'd be interested in hearing constructive criticism and positive thoughts from readers about the direction our game should be taking.

Just write to: Steve Speziale, P.O. Box 184, East Kew 3102.

Please include a few details of your own background i.e., age, supporter history, so I can draw a profile of your ideas. Thank you.

Juve will turn it on at 'The Village'

**BRUNSWICK
JUVENTUS v.
FOOT SCRAY.**

Saturday, the
Olympic Village, K.O.
6pm.

Previous results:
1984 0-2, 1985 3-2,
1986 2-2, 1987 0-0.

What a cracking game this should be!

Footscray did a demolition job on champion APIA last week, with Oscar Crino winning high praise from everyone. The Blues always had the potential to play high quality soccer, but seemed shotshy in front of goal.

Now that seems all about to change under the guidance of World Youth coach Mirsad Fazlagic who seems intent on playing a more open game than his predecessor, Drago Sekularac.

One newcomer to the Footscray squad, Luciano Fabrizio will be very anxious to take the field against his last club, today's opponent.

Our Adelaide colleague, Alan Crisp was very impressed with the showing Juventus put

Les Shorrock
looks at
this week's
NSL games



up against Adelaide City last week, and says he feels that new signings Charlie Egan and Gary McDowall will be very dangerous for the Blues with a match under their belts.

**SOUTH
MEL BOURNE v.
MEL BOURNE
CROATIA**

Sunday, Middle Park,
K.O. 6pm.

Previous results:
1984 3-0 & 1-0,
1985 1-2, 1986 1-0,
1987 2-1.

Nothing seems to be going right for Melbourne Croatia coach Ian Wallace. Although George Hannah returned to stiffen the defence, Robbie Dunn's knee seems to have broken down again and

he could be out for some months.

Wallace's search for another striker continues, and on the evidence of last week's game against Brisbane Lions, Peter Murphy won't fill the bill until he is much fitter.

South coach Brian Garvey on the other hand, looks capable of walking on water at the moment, whilst his back four is unchanged from last season, every other department in the team has been drastically altered, and if his squad of youngsters displays the same dash this week that it did against Preston, Croatia will be in for a torrid game.

**WOLLONGONG
CITY v. PRESTON**
Sunday Brandon,
Park K.O. 5.30pm.

Previous results:
1981 2-2, 1982 1-0,
1983 1-1.

Those of us who think that class imports can lift the NSL standard have only to point to Wollongong to make their point.

The arrival of Alan Brazil for four guest games has uplifted Wollongong, and under his influence Danny Crainie is playing with all the flair he showed when he first came to South Melbourne.

As colleague Laurie Schwab rightly said last week St. George deserved to start favourite for this season's championship, yet Wollongong's midfield, according to all reports ran the Saints ragged, so how good is the 'Gong?

Wollongong won't run Preston ragged, Ernie Merrick has his men too fit for that and this should be one hell of an encounter.

Continued to page ten

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NATIONAL LEAGUE ROUND-UP

CRINO THE MASTER

FOOTSCRAY 3, APIA 0.
Scorers: Spink 45th, Crino 49th & 77th.
Sent off: Bertogna (APIA) 51st.

Referee: Dornie Upjohn.
WHAT a start to the season!

APIA, the defending champion lies vanquished, Oscar Crino has scored four goals and set up two in two successive matches.

With Ken Murphy in a new role, backing up Crino, Vlado Bozinovski and Ernie Tapai, the Footscray midfield finally has the stability it needs for a testing league campaign.

And Footscray is in the process of solving its two big problems: strengthening the attack and increasing the size of its senior squad.

Milan Dimoski of Radnicki Nis and Pelister will be here within two weeks to play on Footscray's forward line.

Luciano Fabrizio was bought from Brunswick Juventus for \$8,000 just before the match against APIA and Footscray has yet to re-include Bill Lazopoulos who is on his honeymoon and Tom Karic who is injured.

The club also has shown interest in Vasco Mitrevski, a defender from Rockdale Ilinden of Sydney, and Zarko Vukcevic, a striker who played for Buducnost. He is a cousin of former Footscray

sweeper Vojislav Vukcevic.

Footscray vice-president Joe Sterpin was disappointed in the days before the match with the outcome of what was to have been a fund-raising dinner.

Eighty people were supposed to have turned up but only about 18 made an appearance.

Perhaps it will be different now that Footscray has won a big match.

They'll all start jumping on the bandwagon again.

Man of the match:
OSCAR CRINO

New coach Mirsad Fazlagic has succeeded in giving Footscray's play a greater degree of width and, joys of joys, the midfielders are now moving up to take shots at goal: something that was sadly lacking last year.

Bozinovski was unlucky not to add to the score when, following a square ball from Ernie Tapai, and with the goal at his mercy, Bozinovski was foiled by goalkeeper Tony Pezzano who spread himself and smothered the shot.

Crino was the mastermind of virtually every attack and APIA defender Arno Bertogna was the first

victim of the referees' get-tough policy, being sent off the field for impeding Warren Spink by pulling the striker's shirt in the 51st minute.

Eddie Campbell and Tapai had scoring attempts before Footscray took the lead right on half time.

Campbell's cross from the left was cleared across goal to Crino, whose angled drive was pushed home by Spink.

Fabrizio came on at half time to replace Footscray captain Zdravko Lujic who has yet to reach the same fitness level of his colleagues after missing the latter part of last season due to injury.

APIA coach Rale Rasic replaced Burin Zajimi with striker Hilton Philips, with Tony Parison moving from the front line to the right flank.

A cross by Spink from the left found Bozinovski at the far post and Bozinovski headed back into the middle for Crino to head Footscray's second goal in the 49th minute.

Bertogna was sent off two minutes later, and Rasic had to switch young Kurt Reynolds from midfield to defence.

Usually a centre back, Reynolds had looked thoroughly lost.

In the 56th minute, Rasic also took off Peter Tredinnick in order to bring on forward Darren Stewart, but nothing worked.

APIA did not manage a single scoring chance during the 90 minutes and was thoroughly outplayed, especially late in the game when Footscray started to play keepings-off, swinging the ball over opponents' heads from one wing to another.

Sweeper Drago Deankovic, who had had a marvellous match, received a deep gash to his head in the 61st minute and resumed with a wide bandage around his forehead and the back of his shirt soaked in blood.

Undeterred, he promptly stopped a 40-metre ball with his head!

No wonder the fans were cheering "Drago, Drago!"

Footscray completed the rout in the 77th minute. Bozinovski crossed from the left, Fabrizio tried a header and Pezzano pushed it out. Crino won the ball back and drove a hot shot past Pezzano for goal No.3.

— LAURIE SCHWAB

DETAILS ROUND ONE

FOOTSCRAY 3 (Spink 45th, Crino 49th & 77th) APIA LEICHHARDT 0.

At Olympic Park, Friday, crowd about 1500. Referee B. Upjohn. Sent off Bertogna (APIA).

FOOTSCRAY: Nikitovic 6 — Deankovic 9 — James 7, van Egmond 7, Campbell 8 — Murphy 9 — Tapai 8, Crino 10, Bozinovski 8 — Spink 7, Lujic 5 (H. T. Fabrizio 6), Coach Mirsad Fazlagic.

APIA LEICHHARDT: Pezzano 6 — Yankos 6 — Brown 6, Bertogna 6 (sent off, 51st) de Marigny 6 — Zajimi 4 (Phillips H. T. 5), Butler 6, Reynolds 4, Tredinnick 5 (Stewart 4 55th) — Parison 4, McKinna 4. Coach Rale Rasic.

MELBOURNE CROATIA 1 (Paul Lewis pen. 78th) BRISBANE LIONS 1.

(Wheeler 73rd) at Olympic Park, Saturday, crowd about 5000, referee D. Voutsinas.

MELBOURNE CROATIA: Olver 5 — Hannah 7, Dunn (inj. 33rd. Valentic 7), Dobson 7, Heys 6 — Biskic 5, Milosevic 5 (Caleta 63rd), Talajic 7, Scott 5 — Lewis 5, Murphy 4.

BRISBANE LIONS: Kearton 7 — Cummings 6, R. Stewart 7, Liddell 7, Niven 7 — Halford 6 (Kerr 69th), Ogden 6, Kirsopp 6, Meredith 7 (inj. Wheeler 68th), Lightbown 8, Dwyer 4. Coach Juan Cutillas.

PRESTON MAKEDONIA 0 SOUTH MELBOURNE 0.

At Connor Reserve, Sunday — crowd about 6,000, referee J. Fearn, cautions Tasevski, Stewart (Preston), Anezakis (South).

PRESTON MAKEDONIA: Triandis 7 — Opasinis 6, Jackson 8, Tasevski 5, Roodhouse 6 — Gojevic 7, Stewart 7, Petrov 6, Dimovski 6 — Brian 6, Gojevic 7. Coach Ernie Merrick.

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Giatas 9 — Russell 7, Anezakis 5 (inj. Fernandes H.T. 5) Blair 6 — Wade 6, Foster 6, Tasios 7, Healy 6 — Trimboli 8, Kalogeros 6. Coach Brian Gavey.

MARCONI 6 (Farina 23rd, 30th, 42nd, & 90th, Gray 46th, de Jong 28th) SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS 0.

At Marconi Stadium Saturday, crowd 1,629, referee A. Owens.

MARCONI: Catlin — Henderson — Gomez, Calderan, Wheatley — Mason, Gray, McCulloch, Katholos — Farina, de Jong. Coach Berti Mariani.

SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS: Keogh 5 — Faulkner 7 — Taylor 5, Parton 6, Marth 6, (Campelj 5 — Carter 5, J. Markovski 6 (T. Markovski 80th), Lennon 6 — Markovac 5. Coach J. Gardiner.

ADELAIDE CITY 0 BRUNSWICK JUVENTUS 0.

At Hindmarsh Sunday. Crowd 5,500. Referee D. Campbell.

Sent off, Petersen (Juve). Cautions Palatsides, McDowall, Peter Lewis (Juve).

ADELAIDE CITY: Zabica 8 — Shillabeer 7, Nyskohus 8, Flounders 9, Tobin 6 — Melta 6, Sorensen 5 (Santrac 46th, 7), Villani 7, Vidmar 6 — Coach Z. Matic.

BRUNSWICK JUVENTUS: Marrara 7 — Belic 7 — Lewis 8, Durakovic 7, McDowall 7, Marley 6 — Palatsides 7 (Lane 81st), Petersen (sent off 54th), Patterson 7 — Egan 6, Zinni 7. Coach L. McKendry.

Olympic blitz

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3
(Pontidas 46th, Patalis 70th, Saad 80th)
SYDNEY CROATIA 0.

Sydney Olympic served notice that it will be a power to be reckoned with as it ripped the Sydney Croatia defence apart in a stunning second half performance.

"We were only going through the motions in the first half and didn't take the game up to them," said coach Eddie Thomson.

"But in the second half we said, 'let's see what they're made of' and once we started, they couldn't stop us. The boys were just out there enjoying themselves," he added.

The second half blitz wasn't long in coming.

In the 46th minute a cross Abbas Saad was palmed out by 'keeper Tony Franken, but the ball fell for midfielder Tom Pontidas who rammed the ball home from close range.

Then a misunderstanding in the Croatia defence led to Olympic's second goal.

A long back pass intended for Franken was intercepted by lightning

fast Terry Patalis, who ran round the full-back to score easily.

With the Olympic midfielder well in control a further score seemed inevitable, and the third goal came when Abbas Saad scooted through the heart of the hesitant Croatia defence which stood off expecting him to pass.

Man of the match:
TOM PONTIDAS

But Saad ran on and cheekily planted the ball past Franken.

"The result gives me a few headaches with Tony Dakos returning from suspension and young Kiwi Robert Ironside coming into the team" said a happy Eddie Thomson after the game.

Croatia player-coach Vedran Rozic has a few headaches too, but for a different reason.

"The absence of Zarko Odzakovic was a crucial factor," he said, "and we also missed Ante Rumora who had gone home."

— JIM LESLIE

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GIATAS FOILS MAKEDONIA

**PRESTON MAK. 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 0.**

At Connor Reserve, Sunday.

A bitter, near gale-force wind spoiled this game as a valid rehearsal for the forthcoming Buffalo Cup-final next Wednesday.

What we were treated to was the sight to two teams going hell for leather trying to keep up with the ball and not always succeeding.

South, with the wind behind it started off like a house on fire, with Steve Tasios and Paul Trimboli, well prompted by Angie Postecoglou, prominent.

But for all South's early pressure, it was Preston that was first to threaten, as South goalie Con Giatas saved well at Steve Smith's feet.

The South came back well and should have scored after a penalty area scramble, but with Phil Trianides beaten and floored, Steve Jackson headed off the Preston line.

Paul Trimboli threaded his way past two defenders, but was stopped with a simple shirt-front by Zoran Tasevski, who was booked.

Preston had another close call three minutes from the break when Postecoglou's fierce free-kick flashed inches over the bar.

The second half gave

us much more of the same, but with Preston dominating territorially without being able to get past jack-in-the-box Giatas in the South goal.

In the last fifteen minutes it was all Preston, but despite having its woodwork hit twice, South survived and went home pleased to have grabbed a point.

Curiously enough, Preston coach Ernie

Merrick also seemed happy with a draw, even though he felt he had gained a moral victory.

**Man of the match:
CON GIATAS**

Certainly the goalless draw didn't shed any light on the possible outcome of next Wednesday's Buffalo Cup-final.

But I came away with the conviction that those of us who were sceptical of South's draconian changes in favour of a youth policy might yet have to eat our words.

Maybe the heavier pitches will find them out, but for the moment, Garvey's Babes are doing him proud.

— LESS SHORROCK

Lions Denied

MELBOURNE CROATIA 1, (PAUL LEWIS) BRISBANE LIONS 1 (WHEELER).

A disputed penalty 12 minutes from the end cost Brisbane Lions victory over Melbourne Croatia in their National Soccer League match at Olympic Park today.

Lions, playing disciplined soccer in their first League match after a one year absence, had to be content with a 1-1 draw.

Substitute David Wheeler, who had replaced the injured Nick Meredith, scored with a short on the turn from just outside the penalty area in the 73rd minute.

And it was Croatia substitute, Joe Caleta, the former St George and Sydney Croatia player, who won the penalty five minutes later.

Caleta twisted and turned his way past opponents into the penalty area where Lions stopper Frank

Liddell got in front of him to turn the ball back to goalkeeper, Jason Kearton.

Caleta fell and referee Dennis Voutsinas awarded a penalty from which Paul Lewis scored with a shot that bounced in off the cross bar.

Croatia suffered a setback when its Socceroo defender Robbie Dunn suffered a recurrence of a knee injury and had to be helped off the pitch.

**Man of the match:
GRANT LIGHTBOWN**

He may need a knee operation which would keep him out of Australia's Olympic Games qualifying series.

Lions introduced New Zealand recruit Paul Halford, who had a promising debut at right mid field until he was replaced by Phil Kerr in the 69th minute.

New Zealander Grant Lightbown had two excellent chances to score for Lions in the second half.

After a long run, Lightbown appeared to have the goal at his mercy in the 54th minute but Croatia captain George Hannah, showing amazing speed, caught up with him and dispossessed him from behind.

In the 72nd minute Lightbown avoided challenges by three opponents but his promising shot was saved by goalkeeper Jeff Oliver.

Peter Murphy, signed from Azzurri of Perth, played his first game for Croatia, linking up with Lewis in attack.

However, he failed to impress.

Russell Stewart was one of Lions' best players, operating as sweeper, while goalkeeper Kearton and mid fielder Meredith also were impressive.

ST. GEORGE GONGED

Wollongong 3, Brazil, 28th, Easthorpe 58th, St. George 1, Fletcher 89th.

WOLLONGONG City returned to the West End National Soccer League with a magnificent 3-1 win over St George in wind and rain at Brandon Park tonight.

Last season's Grand Final winners, St. George showed style for the opening 20 minutes but from then on had to play second fiddle to a much fitter and more determined Wolves.

Disappointed St. George coach Frank Arok said after the game he had no excuses to offer.

"They deserved their

win and will trouble most teams in the league this season," Arok said.

With Scots Alan Brazil and Danny Crainie running riot among a weary Saints defence in the second half, the home team should have won by a bigger margin.

**Man of the match:
DANNY CRAINIE**

It wasn't until 20 seconds from the end that replacement Graeme Fletcher scored a consolidation goal for the visitors.

The second half had belonged to Wollongong and their midfield outclassed everything St. George had to offer.

Wollongong actually scored their first goal against the run of play after 28 minutes.

Crainie powered a cross in from the left and Brazil was perfectly positioned on the far post to score.

The second goal came after 58 minutes and killed any St. George hopes of salvaging the game.

Rade Stevanovski pumped a great pass forward into the path of Randall Easthorpe who beat goalkeeper Mike Gibson in a race to the ball and hammered it home.

With Crainie really stamping his class on the game, Wollongong should have scored three more goals before Stevanovski made it 3-0.

It came from a brilliant move starting

with Crainie to Brazil who laid a perfect ball to the feet of Stevanovski to place it into the vacant net.

Wollongong coach John Fleming said it was a great result for his team particularly as he has five key players still out injured.

"It was our first ever win against St. George and my team really deserves a lot of credit.

We went out there intent on putting a lot of pressure on their defence and once we took over midfield, midway through the first half, I was always confident," he said.

The game was played in driving rain and a strong southerly wind — conditions the Wollongong team always handled better.

— FRED PHILLIPS



● South goalkeeper Con Giatas collects a high cross as Preston's Steve Jackson challenges. Pic: Les Shorrocks.

FOUR FOR FARINA

MARCONI 6 (Farina 23rd, 30th, 42nd, & 90th, Gray 46th, de Jong 28th) SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS 0.

George Cross has started off the '88 season where it ended the '87 season, trying to fend off relegation.

**Man of the match:
FRANK FARINA**

The reprieve was short-lived however. In the 23rd minute a beautiful three man

Then in the 28th minute Kiwi International Fred de Jong opened his NSL account to put Marconi two-up, after a Katholos free-kick.

Two minutes later Farina left Shaun Parton for dead and up came Marconi's third.

Four minutes before the break, Farina got on to the end of a Tommy McCulloch cross and brought up goal number four.

Then slaughter resumed only a minute after the break when keeper Sean Keogh handled outside the box and Ian Gray smacked home a vicious free-kick.

Six minutes time from George's cup overflowed when Marconi goalie Bob Catlin saved a Les Carter penalty.

Farina's fourth goal just before the final was irrelevant, to everyone but Farina, that is.

The irony of it all from George's point of view at least, is that Farina would have been in Holland by now, playing for Roda Kerkrade, had it not been for a hold-up over his work permit.

Marconi coach Berti Mariani was gracious enough to say after the game that George was not as bad as the score suggests.

"I thought they played quite well in the first half," he said and what's more he seemed sincere.

— FRED FISHER



● Farina celebrates.

Bad as the score in this game was from George's point of view, it could have been even worse, so complete was Marconi's domination.

Marconi had the ball in the net through Frank Farina after only eight minutes, but referee Arthur Owens disallowed the goal.

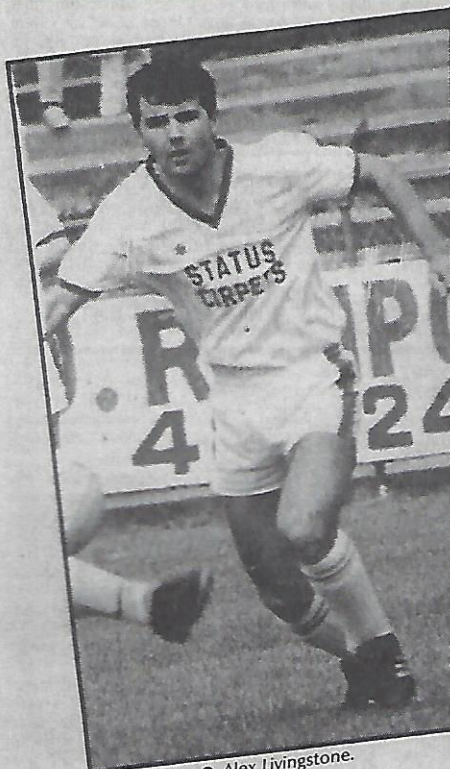
move involving Ian Gray, Peter Katholos and Gerry Gomez left Frank Farina with the simplest of tasks to fire the ball home.

Marconi was swamping George and Farina and Gomez both had headers cleared off the line.



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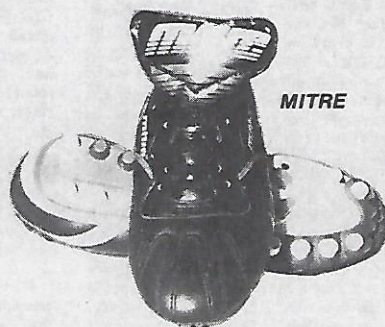
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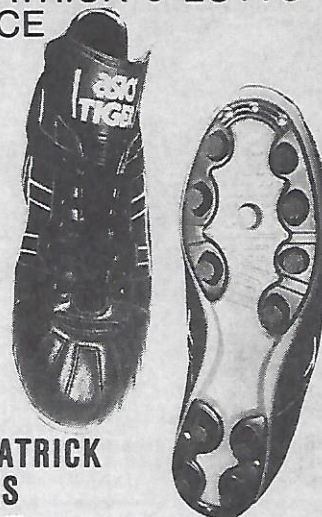
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THERE'S NO PANIC AT BULLEEN

BULLEEN Veneto must be one of the most unlucky clubs in Victoria. After setting up the club with excellent facilities and working through the lower leagues they find that their first year in the State League sees six teams being relegated at the end of the season.

But the club, known for its loyalty to players, has not hit the panic button, quite the opposite.

New coach, former Socceroo Jimmy Rooney, appreciates he has a tough year ahead but refuses to dive into what he describes as an over inflated transfer market.

However, Rooney realises he will need more experience at the club if they are to do well this year, to add to the wealth of young talent at his disposal.

St. Alban's sweeper Robbie Krajacic was Rooney's first signing, and at \$3,000 he would have to be one of the bargain buys of the year.

Krajacic will team up with former Heidelberg and Fawknor defender Fab Angele to form a strong partnership in the heart of the defence. Angele has recovered from a knee construction which kept him out of the game all last season.

With Paul Romano, ex-Juventus, and Tony Cavilli both having good seasons last year, there will certainly be worse back fours in the league in 1988.

Andy Bozikas has returned to training after missing last season with a virus and has responded well to the three nights per week schedule.

His experience will be invaluable on the night if he can regain his pace of recent years.

Laurie Boarotto has tasted the State League before with Northcote City, but after a good first season he fell out of favour and returned to Bulleen. Boarotto is a couple of years older now and could be one of the finds of the year.

Joe D'Amico is training again and will partner Boarotto up front.

"We have 28 players, many of them young lads training at the moment. There are some good prospects but only time will tell whether we can hold our own," said Rooney.

"Many of these players have got the club to State League, they deserve a chance to prove they can play in it. I believe we have the basis of a good side," he said.

Rooney praised the general atmosphere at the club. "Bulleen's policy is excellent. I hope they survive this year of change in the State League," he said.

The return of Don Di Fabrizio, appointment of Bobby McLaughlan as coach, and some shrewd signings over the close season, are the highlights in the Morwell Falcons camp.

McLaughlan and the Don have worked hard to prepare what has become a very strong squad with five new players joining the club.

Dave Reynolds, a 25-year-old keeper from New Zealand has arrived and looks a good choice. An Irishman, he came on a free transfer from Gisborne City.

Reynolds will renew acquaintance with

Gerry Bennett... one of the new players at Morwell Falcons this season. His enthusiasm and experience will be a real asset.



State League round-up with GARY CUTLER

another former Gisborne City player Kenny Drakeford.

Drakeford, and yours truly, were two of three players, striker Bobby Taol being the other, sacked by Northcote City midway through last season.

Northcote did not turn up to a second tribunal hearing and Drakeford was released for only \$500 so McLaughlan snapped up the highly-rated midfielder immediately.

Captain of Polonia (last year's champions), Gerry Bennett is another newcomer and at \$1,000 his enthusiasm and experience are a real asset.

Neither McLaughlan or DeFabrizio will give away the name of one of the two remaining newcomers, although they did say he is a midfielder who played in the Premier League in Scotland last year and is a well-known player.

The final recruit is John Sokoluk, a 22-year-old striker from Berwick Rangers in Scotland. Sokoluk is a similar style player to Charlie Egan, hopefully for Morwell fans, he will score as many goals.

Morwell have gained these five players for just \$1500 plus two airfares from the UK. When you consider the players already at the club of the calibre of Harry Bingham, one of the best markers in the league, former Coventry City player left-back Jeff Doyle, who has as sweet a left leg as you will see, not to mention Emil Bruns, Gerry Clarke, John O'Callaghan and strikers Stan Webster and Ian Stinton who is training hard to regain his scoring touch, the squad speaks for itself.

It would not be the first time that such a strong squad has failed but I believe McLaughlan and DiFabrizio have done a good job early and the benefits could well be seen by the end of the year.

Graham Tutill, one of the strengths of the squad last year, has not been seen at the club and is available for transfer for a negotiable fee. Tutill is a former Footscray JUST defender with NSL experience.

FAWKNER, the team that for so long last season was in the hunt for the State League title, have made several signings in an effort to go places this year and record their first State League title.

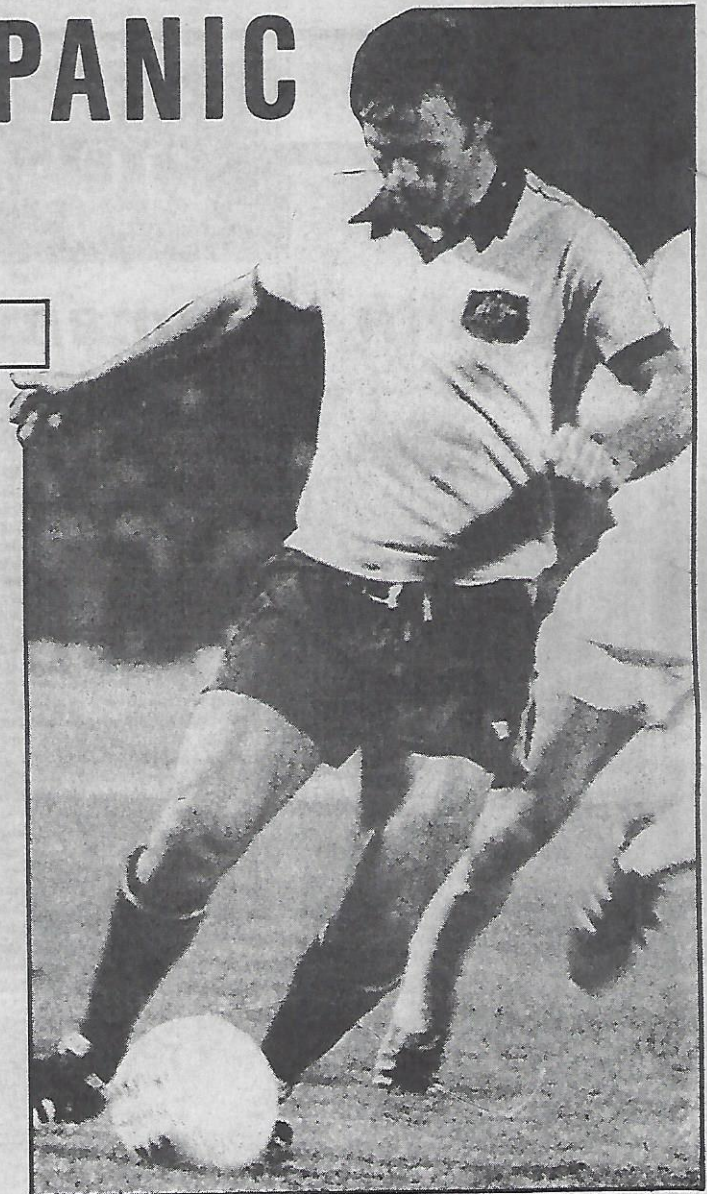
Dean Hennessey, the Box Hill central defender or midfield utility, was first signing and at the \$3,500 transfer fee he looks to be a good buy for coach Frank McAleer.

The breakdown of last year's championship side Polonia has left the way open for Fawknor to negotiate with striker Kees Storm in an effort to find a striking partner for Doug Brown. It seems Hennessey is certain to be used in a central defensive role after the departure of Caesar Fattore to Caulfield City.

Also gone to Caulfield City is winger Bruno Gassala. It is the defence that appears to be McAleer biggest worry as they were badly exposed by the fitter, stronger running of Heidelberg United in the recent Buffalo Cup encounter which Fawknor lost 4-1.

Heidelberg is one of the sides that Fawknor will encounter during the State League this year and they will need to tighten up the defence if they are to be any sort of threat. In the middle of the park they have a wealth of talent with Jed Stenson once again being the main ball player. The other mid-field spot should be filled by Juventus Dynamo Robbie Cullen who has had talks with the club and has been training but it would appear at this stage that Cullen may sign for Keilor Austria in the second division.

McAleer is hopeful that he can convince the tiny Scot not to make such a drop from the National League to the second division as his services would be invaluable to the Italian-backed club.



Jimmy Rooney... "I hope Bulleen survive this year of change in the State League."
Picture: Les Shorrock.

Former New Zealand international keeper, Richard Wilson, has not started training this year but is believed to be away on business and looks certain to again be in goal for Fawknor.

Irish import, Roy Walsh, had a good season last year at right back and will again be one of the key figures if Fawknor is to do well. The squad may need a couple of players before it can be a real threat for the championship but don't be surprised if these players are in the blue and white shirts on March 5 for the kick-off.

NORTHCOTE City could have pulled off one of the close season scoops in signing former Preston defender Martin Woodall who returned to England midway through last season. Fawknor defender Dean Hennessey spoke to Woodall while in the UK and Woodall told him that everything had been agreed for him to come to Northcote before the start of the season.

Woodall is at present playing in England with Wycombe and would give Northcote the strength it has lacked in defence in recent seasons. Northcote was very lucky last year to avoid relegation by winning its last game and ensuring that Frankston Pines was relegated ahead of them.

Roy McLaren has returned to Northcote for his second stint after leaving the club last year due to the club's lack of ambition. I would be surprised if the ambition is there now as Northcote, with undoubtedly one of the best setups and facilities in the State League, has always lacked enterprise to stay in top company.

This year may be different with six teams being relegated and once again can Northcote rely on the experience of Juan Torro to be its play maker.

Defender Arthur Patiniotis who McLaren rates as one of the best players in the State League is wanted by other clubs and may feel that the time is right to move to a more successful and ambitious side.

Peter Constantinou missed a large part of last season due to a knee injury but did return to the side late in the year and scored some valuable goals to help it to avoid relegation.

Constantinou appears to be their main weapon in their fight to keep out of the bottom six and remain a State League team.

Information on the club is a little sketchy as after five phone calls to members or former members of the committee, I failed to get any response.

Much will rest on the shoulders of Woodall, Patiniotis, Torro and Co., if the club is to avoid the big drop. Northcote has struggled for the past few seasons and seems certain to be a candidate for First Division in 1989.

Don't miss Cutler's State League comment next Thursday.

Continued page 10

VSF



Victorian Soccer Federation presents OLYMPIC PARK &

Preston Makedonia

Smith — a man of quality



● Ernie Merrick.

PRESTON MAKEDONIA 3 (Tasevski 50th, Smith 82nd, 85th) HEIDELBERG 1 (Ousalkas 41st). Buffalo Cup semi-final at Olympic Park last week. Crowd: 5,600. Referee: J. Stojkovic.

PRESTON MAKEDONIA: Trianides 6 — Roodhouse 7, Jackson 8, Tasevski 8 (Piculovski 64th), Opasinis 7 — Petrov 7, Dimovski 7 (Jolevski 75th), Gojevic 7, Stewart 8 — Smith 8, Brian 7. Coach: E. Merrick. HEIDELBERG: Ford 8 — Kanousulis 7, Ousalkas 7, Fraser 6, Byrne 6, Katsakis 85th, Anastasiadis 7, Valentine 7, appas 6, Tzintzis 6 (Tasevski H.T. 5) — Dealey 5, (Lazankas 85th), Lucchesi 6. Coach: T. Hennessy.

IF I had my meagre worldly possessions riding on Preston Makedonia and with seconds to go a Makedonia player got into a scoring position, with a chance to win the game, I'd like that player to be Steve Smith.

It was the quality of his finishing which clinched a Buffalo Cup Final berth for Ernie Merrick's men and sent gallant Heidelberg out of the running for a bit of early-season glory.

But Heidelberg has sent out a warning to other State League clubs and at least three rival coaches have taken note. They expect Heidelberg to be one of the teams to challenge for this year's title.

And in Paul Ford, Heidelberg coach Terry Hennessy looks to have found the much needed replacement for national team goalie Jeff Oliver.

Young Ford kept Heidelberg's hopes alive after a first half headed goal by Nick Ousalkas was cancelled out by a headed reply from a strangely unmarked Zoran Tasevski at the far post in the 50th minute.

Michael Brian had the chance to put Makedonia ahead 12 minutes later but Ford made a stunning point-blank save and in the 78th minute a firm drive by Brian was tipped over by the Heidelberg keeper.

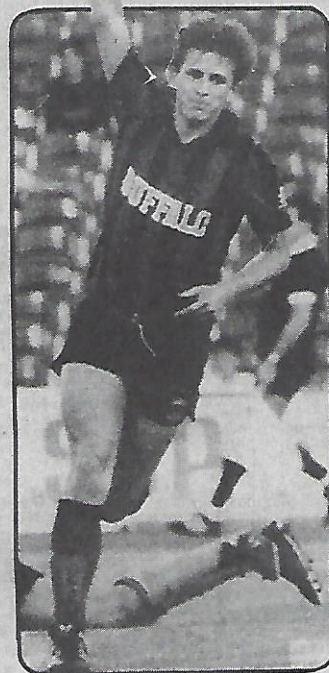
But he was helpless in the 82nd minute when the ball fell kindly for Smith after John Stewart had tried to put him in the clear and Smith calmly stroked it inside the near post, past the advancing Ford.

Three minutes later Scott Fraser got too close to Smith and paid the penalty. A long throw landed at Smith's feet. In a flash he'd turned past Fraser and sent the ball into the far corner of goal, sounding the death knell for Heidelberg.

It was an intriguing contest and throughout the first half an outsider would have been hard pressed to say which side was the NSL outfit and which was the State League standard bearer.

It was enjoyable to watch, in keeping with the standard of spectacle in the '88 Buffalo Cup.

— CRAIG MACKENZIE



● Steve Smith.

What the c

AFTER the goalless draw last Sunday between Preston Makedonia and South Melbourne I asked both coaches if they had learnt anything that would give them an edge in next Wednesday's Buffalo Cup.

Both Preston's Ernie Merrick and South's Brian Garvey surprised me by expressing their admiration for the other team.

Merrick, whilst making it plain that he expected to win, showed admiration for South's rather drastic youth policy.

"You have to admire Brian Garvey for daring to commit himself to a youth policy and it says a lot for the committee of the club that they've backed him to the hilt," he said.

"It takes a lot of courage to jettison seven senior players as they have done, but so far it's paying off, isn't it.

"As regards today's game I was quite happy with the result, I thought we could have won the game in the end, but South was always dangerous on the break and I think it's a very good team.

"We got on top in the last ten minutes and I think that's when we will win the Cup. Here we do an enormous amount of fitness training and weight training and that's how we beat Heidelberg in the semi-final.

"And we nearly beat South today in the closing stages of the game. But I'm going to change my tactics a little after seeing these boys in action. One thing I can guarantee is that you'll see a team in action that works very hard for each other."



● PRESTON MAKEDONIA: Back Row (left to right): Goce Dimovski, Steve Smith, Michael Brian, Steve Jackson, Phil Trianides, Bill Piculovski, Steve Gojevic, Zoran Tasevski. Front Row: Con Opasinis, Ian Roodhouse, George Petrov.

ts the 1988 Buffalo Cup Final

PM WEDNESDAY



y. South Melbourne

Garvey's youngsters did the job

TH MELBOURNE 2 (Foster 25th) MELBOURNE
ATIA 0. Buffalo Cup Semi-final at Olympic Park
week. Crowd: 5,600. Referee: B. Upjohn.

TH MELBOURNE: Giatas 6 — Russell 6,
 akis 6, Blair 6, Postecoglou 6 — Wade 7, Foster
 asios 7, Healy 6, — Trimball 7, Kalogeros 6.
 h: B. Garvey.

BOURNE CROATIA: Oliver 6 — Babic 5, Valentic
 obson 5 (Garma 84th), Juric 4 (Caleja 63rd),
 ic 4, Talajic 5, Milosevic 6, Heys 5 — Lewis 6,
 t 6. Coach: I. Wallace.

BOURNE Croatia somewhat
 ominously surrendered the Buffalo Cup
 it won for the past two years as Garvey's
 es proved too much for Wallace's
 reshift defence.

olleague Craig MacKenzie and I tossed
 o decide who should cover the first game
 ie double-header and he won, but I got the
 er of the deal.

think most of us went along to Olympic
 c thinking that South, having shed no
 r than seven senior players and replaced
 n with youngsters, would find the going
 h against the more experienced Croatia.

ut the South lads mustn't have read the
 ot, because they tore into Croatia from

the first whistle and by half-time it was quite
 apparent that Croatia would have to make a
 comeback worthy of Lazarus to have a hope
 of winning.

It was sweet revenge for the South fans
 after the way their team was humbled in last
 year's final.

In all fairness to Croatia, it has to be
 mentioned that what with weddings,
 honeymoons and injuries, the team was only
 a shadow of last year's victorious one.

In fact, out of the 25 players who took part
 in the '87 final, only nine played in this semi.

Croatia opened brightly enough, with
 Branko Milosevic looking very dangerous
 and in the 15th minute he carved out an
 opening for Josip Biskic, who wantonly
 squandered it.

But then South took over, with its eager-
 beaver youngsters making the Croatia
 defenders look lead-footed.

In the 25th minute, South won a corner,
 the ball was only partially cleared and from it
 David Healy gave a hint of things to come as
 his shot sailed inches over the bar.

Paul Lewis raised Croatia's hopes when

he turned smartly and fired in a shot that hit
 the foot of the post before going out, but I
 think Con Giatas had it covered anyway.

Then only great anticipation by Jeff Oliver
 saved the Reds as Steve Tasios threaded his
 way through a bemused defence and looked
 set to score until Oliver plucked the ball off his
 toe.

But South wasn't to be denied and 10
 minutes before the break took the lead with a
 tremendous strike by Paul Foster. The ball
 had bobbed about around the Croatia
 penalty area until it fell for Foster who
 volleyed superbly past Oliver and into the top
 corner of the net.

It was only icing on the cake when Tasios
 scored 12 minutes into the second half after a
 fierce shot by Paul Trimball had been
 charged down.

South was so much on top in the second
 term that I reckon it had 12 scoring
 opportunities to Croatia's one.

It was an exhilarating game and I can
 hardly wait for the final, which is far from a
 certainty for the more experienced Preston.

— LES SHORROCK



● Brian Garvey.

ches say...

ian Garvey was very guarded about his Final
 ces. "I thought the wind would be very crucial
 y. I told my boys that if they had the wind first,
 they had to put a lot of pressure and force the
 , but I was disappointed with our first half
 t. We improved 100% in the second half and I
 ght we got right on top in the first 15 minutes,
 or no wind. In that period I thought we might
 have snatched a goal.

hen Preston started to use the wind better
 we had and they hit the bar and the post, so I
 ose we were lucky to get away with the draw.

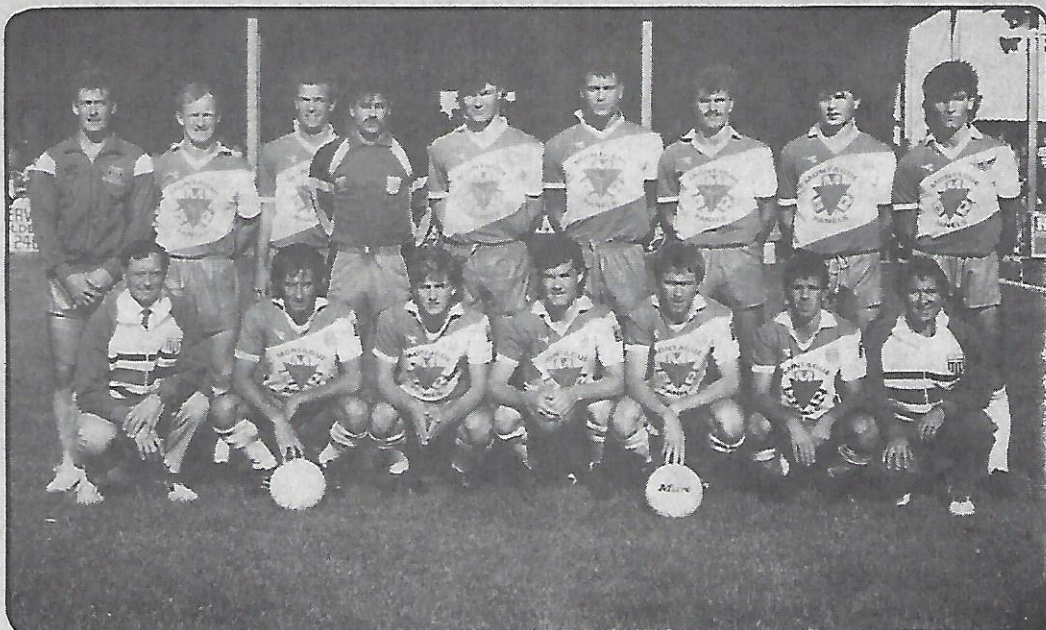
What today's game has taught me is that the
 l is going to be a very hard game and also a
 close one. But we will be better than we were
 y. Today we played a game of two halves, but
 Wednesday you'll see that we will put in 90
 es hard work.

tactics will be different, because for a start,
 pic Park is bigger than this ground (Connor
 rve), and the wind can't blow straight down
 round there."

arvey doesn't go overboard in praising his
 ers, but when I put it to him that he owed the
 t to his young goalkeeper, Con Giatas, he
 dedly agreed. "Yes, he had a very sound
 e", was his summary... high praise indeed
 him.

nd when I put it to him that it was likely to be a
 close game he grinned and said: "We'd better
 practising our penalties, then."

ES SHORROCK



● **SOUTH MELBOURNE:** Back Row (left to right): Danny Wright, Bobby Russell, Paul Foster, Con Giatas, Steve Blair, Manny Anezakis, Angie Postecoglou, Paul Fernandes, Harry Micheil.
 Front Row: Brian Garvey (coach), Steve Tasios, Paul Trimball, David Healy, Paul Wade, George Kalogeros, Henry Buck (physio).

NSL Round-up continued from page 5

ITALIAN DERBY ENDS ALL SQUARE

ADELAIDE CITY 0.
BRUNSWICK JUVENTUS 0.

Man of
the match:
NEVILLE
FLOUNDERS

This NSL pipe-opener had every ingredient the 5,500 crowd needed to remain enthralled except goals.

For once, most of the fans were satisfied, despite the lack of goals, because they were rapt in the competitive clash which involved a missed penalty, a sending off and three bookings!

Former Soccerro Mike Petersen got his marching orders from referee Don Campbell in

the 54th minute after a second caution.

Juve new signings from South Melbourne, Garry McDowall and Charlie Egan showed promise for the future, whilst City's new goalkeeper, Robert Zabica became an instant hero with his 13th minute penalty save from Scott Patterson.

— ALAN CRISP

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One

NSL Preview from page three

SYDNEY CROATIA v. SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS

Sunday Croatian
Sports Centre K.O.
7pm.

Previous result: 3-1.

With the season only one week old, Georgie seems already to be behind the eight-ball. behind the eight-ball. Coach John Gardiner's problem is a tiny playing staff, although he expects to gain a visa player from Scotland shortly.

Georgie had entertained high hopes of signing Charlie Egan from South, but in the end Egan opted to join Juventus along with Gary McDowall.

The draw hasn't been favourable to the Sunshine battlers, either after a 6-0 drubbing away from home the last thing you need is another away game, but Georgie has to make the trek to the Croatian Sports Centre.

If Georgie returns with a point, it will have achieved a good result.

— LES SHORROCK

CROYDON City, the champion of two years ago, is still in the process of working out who will play for them in 1988. There is a huge squad of players presently training under assistant coach Jim Tansey who has been in charge while Miron Bleiberg was overseas.

Some of the players training at Croydon include Jim Campbell, Dave McIntosh and Andy Humble, all presently signed with Croatia, Peter Verrechia the Fawkner striker, Aki Kotzamisialis and Gordon Flavel both from last year's championship side at Polonia.

Last year was a little disappointing for Croydon after having won the State League championship the previous year. They are hoping to recruit some of these players in a push to have an experienced side that proved successful in recent years. Although some of these may be reaching their late 20s and early 30s, Croydon proved two years ago

that experienced players can outlast the enthusiasm of youth and it may once again be the case if Bleiberg can mould the side together and get them playing to his style.

Alex Livingstone has been training at several other clubs but it is believed Bleiberg would like to hold on to him. This seems likely as a reported move for Livingstone to Green Gully now seems unlikely.

But whether the club's financial resources can afford signing some of these experienced players remains to be seen. If it does, Croydon will certainly be one of the sides to beat especially on the compact Croydon City ground.

Former goalkeeper, Billy Whiteside, is helping with the coaching of young goal keepers at Croydon. These transfers will need to be sorted out fairly soon to enable Bleiberg time to get a settled side for their first State League game.

HOW YOUR N.S.L. CLUB FARED LAST SEASON 1987

	ADELAIDE CITY	APIA LEIGHARDT	FOOTSCRAY	S. GEORGE CROSS	HEIDELBERG	JUVENTUS	MARCONI	MELB. CROATIA	PRESTON MAK.	ST. GEORGE	SOUTH MELB.	SYDNEY CROATIA	SYDNEY OLYMPIC
ADELAIDE C.		0-1	0-0	1-1	4-1	4-0	1-2	3-0	0-0	0-1	0-2	0-0	2-2
APIA LEIGHARDT	2-2		3-1	1-1	1-0		1-1	1-1	2-0	0-0	4-0	1-2	2-1
FOOTSCRAY	2-2	0-0		1-1	1-0	0-1	0-3	0-0	0-0	0-2	1-2	0-0	1-0
S. GEORGE CROSS	0-0	2-3	1-2		1-1	0-2	2-2	0-2	0-1	2-2	3-0	0-0	2-1
HEIDELBERG	1-1	2-2	3-0	6-2		0-1	1-5	1-2	0-1	1-2	1-1	0-2	3-1
JUVENTUS	0-1	1-1	0-0	1-0	3-1		2-1	0-1	1-1	1-0	3-1	0-0	1-0
MARCONI	1-1	0-2	4-0	3-3	1-0	2-0		0-1	0-1	2-0	0-2	0-1	1-1
MELB. CROATIA	3-3	0-1	0-1	1-1	1-0	2-0	1-0		0-2	1-1	0-2	3-1	1-1
PRESTON MAK.	2-1	4-0	3-0	0-2	1-2	0-0	2-2	1-0		2-0	2-1	1-2	1-1
ST. GEORGE	2-0	1-3	1-0	2-1	1-1	4-1	1-2	0-2	3-0		3-2	2-1	2-0
SOUTH MELB.	1-0	1-1	1-2	3-0	1-1	1-0	0-1	2-1	2-2	2-1		1-1	2-2
SYDNEY CROATIA	2-3	0-1	0-2	3-1	2-0	1-0	0-5	6-1	1-1	0-1	2-0		0-1
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	1-0	1-1	3-0	2-0	3-1	1-0	2-1	1-1	1-4	0-0	2-2	1-4	

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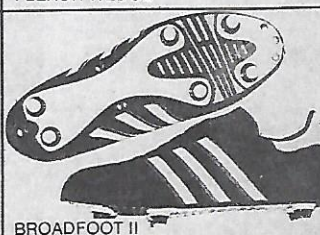
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BROADFOOT II

Anastasiadis outshines 'em all

PAUL Trimboli, Steve Jackson, Steve Smith, Bobby Russell, John Anastasiadis, Nick Ousalkas — who will be remembered as the best player of 1988 Buffalo Cup?

All have been impressive to a greater or lesser extent. Others, like Paul Jurcic, Frank Valentic and Branco Milosevic of Croatia starred in one match but were not as impressive in the next. Alex Marshall of Polonia also had his moment of glory, despite the burden around his midriff.

There is no award for the Buffalo Cup best player this year, because for the first time, the competition is being played on a knock-out basis, making judging difficult.

Performances in the final between South and Preston next Wednesday will leave the most lasting impressions, but as far as I am concerned, no-one has outshone Anastasiadis of Heidelberg.

He has star quality. He is a virtuoso, a man of great skill, speed and cheek. To Heidelberg, he is like money in the bank. Others in that category include Milosevic, Goe Dimovski, and the greatest of them all, Oscar Crino.

But while some Cup-series still are remembered for the overpowering influence of one star or another, that is not true of the current series.

Looking back over the years, my first recollection of a truly dominant figure in the night series — then called the Ampol Cup — is of powerful red-haired midfielder Jock Goodwin who led Slavia into the 1968 final.

Goodwin, who had starred in every previous match, equalised at 1-1 in the 90th minute after Alfred Glaser had given Croatia the lead but Slavia succumbed to Billy Vojtek's winning goal in extra time. I still rate Goodwin among the best 20 players I have seen in Australia. He later played in the Juventus side that won the 1970 championship, Dockerty Cup, State League Cup and unofficial Australian championship play-off against Yugal, before moving on to Keilor-Austria.

Tommy Stankovic, then 38 years old, put on some marvellous performances for Footscray JUST, which won him the "Soccer News" award as the best player of the 1970 Ampol Cup. He polled 20 votes, one more than joint runners-up Jimmy Mackay and Horst Rau, both of Croatia. Stankovic was to retire from State League soccer at the age of 40. In a poll conducted in May 1986 by "Soccer Action", Stankovic was rated equal fifth among the all-time

Schwab SHOTS

greatest players of Australian soccer. Votes were cast by soccer experts all over the country and the leaders, in order, were: 1. Ray Baartz, 2. Attila Abonyi, 3. Leo Baumgartner, 4. Vic Janczyk, 5. Tommy Stankovic and Alan Davidson, 7. Johnny Warren, 8. Andrzej Zientara, 9. Frank Micic, 10. Branko Buljevic and Jimmy Rooney.

The 1976 Ampol Cup is remembered for Peter Ollerton, who had joined Hellas from APIA. Hellas beat Footscray JUST 4-1 in the final, with Ollerton scoring a hat-trick which brought to seven the total he scored in the series. His haul was the Cup's highest in at least six years but it was typical of Ollerton's scoring exploits during his prime. After transferring to APIA from Wilhelmina, Ollerton dominated the Sydney scene, twice finishing as top scorer in the NSW First Division and scoring five goals in APIA's victory over Auburn in the 1974 NSW Ampol Cup final.

Billy Vojtek, who had starred for so long with Croatia, entered a new phase of his illustrious career when, as player-coach, he guided Green Gully to victory over Slavia in the 1979 Cup final. One of the true greats of Australian soccer, Vojtek still was playing last season, with Chelsea, although well into his forties.

Crino, then with South, was by far the best player of the 1984 series. A trophy was awarded on votes cast by the press and Crino polled a massive 37 — 20 more than runner-up Josip Biskic of Croatia. It goes without saying that South won the Cup. The score in the final was 3-1 against Croatia and a crowd of 12,500 was there to witness the triumph of South, the triumph of Crino.

Heidelberg goalkeeper Jeff Oliver emulated Crino by winning the 1985 award by a 20-point margin. He polled 36 votes while his closest rivals, George Hannah (Croatia) and Sean Lane (Preston) managed only 16. Heidelberg's 5-1 victory over Croatia in the final was one of the most emphatic I can remember.

The following year, 1986, belonged to Heidelberg's Peter Tsolakis. The voting system was varied and Tsolakis won with 11, with Lane of

Preston finishing second with 7.5. Tsolakis did not take part in this year's series as he is trying to join South but once his transfer is finalised, I am sure he will be one of the top drawcards in the NSL.

Stars queue to play here BRITISH stars are queuing up to play here during the European off-season.

Former South Melbourne President Jim Diamataris and Pierre Pallas, operating as PD Enterprises Pty. Ltd. have been corresponding with First Artist Management, a London-based firm run by former England international Paul Mariner.

In a letter last week, Mariner advised that the following are eager to play here if the terms are right: Gordon Strachan (Manchester United and Scotland), Roy Aitken (Celtic and Scotland), Ally McCoist (Rangers and Scotland), Tony Cottee (West Ham and England), John Wark (Ipswich), Charlie Nicholas (Aberdeen and Scotland), Steve Williams (Arsenal and England).

Wollongong is putting its faith in guest players, having already imported Alan Brazil but only a select few will guarantee an appreciable increase at the gate.

Nicholas, I am sure, would be popular here. He is a showman, an entertainer.

I have my doubts about the rest.

Guest players in the NSL Over the years have included:

South Melbourne: Malcolm Macdonald, ST GEORGE Ralph Coates, Ray Clemence, Charlie George.

WEST ADELAIDE Graeme Souness.

BLACKTOWN CITY: Kevin Keegan.

NEWCASTLE K. UNITED: Bobby Charlton, Mike Channon.

BRISBANE LIONS: George Best.

ADELAIDE CITY: Justin Fashanu.

FOOTSCRAY Zdravko Borovnica, Dragan Nikitovic.

SYDNEY CITY: Eli Ohana.

Of those, Macdonald, Keegan, George and Best were the crowd-drawers.

How about a Greek guest star, somebody?

CROATIA's team-building program seems to have fallen apart.

Only two weeks ago, the club was confident of getting Goran Jerkovic from Osijek and either Ivica



John Anastasiadis

Cvijetkovic or Jozo Bogdanovic from Dinamo Zagreb, as well as Garry McDowall from South.

That's all off now and the only player Croatia has recruited is an unknown forward, Paul Murphy, from Azzurri of Perth.

What I want to know is: What's wrong with Dennis Morovic? He would have been a better buy. He is skilful, strong, a towering giant, excellent in the air and he was top scorer in the State League. Sydney Croatia was interested in him last year. Why won't Melbourne Croatia make him an offer?

It was on the basis of the recruits Croatia said it had lined up that I tipped the club to be Melbourne's big improver of 1988. In the light of recent events however, Croatia may well be overshadowed by all clubs except George Cross which looks totally hopeless. Alan Davidson's return will help and we await the arrival of midfielder Paul Donnelly from Perth.

Meanwhile, it seems clear that the most skilful teams should finish near the top of the ladder due to the tougher refereeing regulations which punish the physical teams and protect the skilful, ball-playing teams. Does that mean Adelaide City, Footscray or Marconi will win the championship?

While on the subject, I urge all fans to remember that the championship will be decided by a grand final this year. It does not matter who finishes at the top at the end of the home-and-away series.

The grand final ensures a climactic end to the season. It is a big event in the tradition of big events in other sports. It can be promoted, marketed, raved about. Without a grand final, NSL soccer simply does not have a big event. And it is nonsense for the dour traditionalists to claim that only the top team on the ladder deserves to be champion. That is not the case in the World Cup. And does it not take a true champion to be able to win the final series against the four other top teams in the country?

— LAURIE SCHWAB

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Jeepers, keepers...

I'M NO TROUBLE MAKER — LAUMETS

IT would not be inaccurate to describe Peter Laumets as one of the best goal keepers in Australia. Or his mood of the moment, puzzled and not a little disillusioned.

Laumets was put on the transfer list by South Melbourne during the close season despite making no move on his own part to sever his connections with the club he has served faithfully and well for nine years.

"It came as a bit of a shock I can tell you when I was informed that I was no longer wanted," he says with more than a touch of regret.

It's hard to grasp when a big slice of your life is taken away from you like that. But what was even more aggravating was that he

and the other unwanted stars — Gary McDowall, Charlie Egan and Danny Crainie — were branded as troublemakers.

"I don't know who put these stories around but they weren't true. OK so we spoke out mind from time to time but surely that's better than lying."

Another thing Laumets cannot quite understand is the lack of offers for his services.

"Maybe the 'troublemaker' name has put clubs off. I don't know. What I do know is that I am listed at \$12,000 and I have been told that the club would not be difficult to deal with. Perhaps I

would even get away for half that."

Laumets admits that he misses his soccer and can't wait to get back in action even if it meant going to a State League club. "I would have to consider everything at this stage.

"At the moment I don't quite know what to do with myself on match days. I find myself looking at my watch and working out how long it is to half time and so on.

"I even tried going to a couple of night games early on but I just couldn't concentrate properly. I kept thinking I should be playing and I should.

"I am training as much as I can on my own but mostly I am running and concentrating on general fitness. I am missing the ball work I need and I may have to approach some State League club for facilities to train but even there some may think it's not a good idea as I may unsettle their own goalkeepers.

"Believe me this being dumped is a shattering experience."

Laumets has played for Australia and Victoria and, at 31, obviously still has a future. When Len McKendry was his coach at Hellas, he once told me that Laumets was one of the

strongest and fittest men in soccer. That hasn't changed enough to make him a chancy proposition.

In fact I am quite perplexed that he has not been snapped up before this. It seems an awful waste, especially when top class goalkeepers are in such short supply in Australia.

Talking to Laumets makes one aware of just how cruel soccer can be. Last season — and for seven before that — he was a regular member of the Hellas team.

Today, it seems, he is unwanted by anyone. Surely he cannot have "gone back" that much. Of course not.

There was talk of player-power at Hellas long before last season was over and maybe the stories were not without foundation, but Laumets believes they have been grossly exaggerated.

"I have never been a troublemaker. I am too interested in playing to jeopardise a career I love by causing trouble," he says. "Anyway I am determined to prove that I am still good enough to hold my own at the top level.

"Obviously I want to stay in the National League if possible and it doesn't have to be in Melbourne and I am sure I could work a

transfer with my job if necessary.

"It's amazing how determined you feel to prove people wrong once the initial shock of finding yourself unwanted wears off.

"At the moment I am so angry that I can't wait to get back in the game and show that I am as good as I ever was. All I want is a chance."

Whether he will get that chance remains to be seen. It is true that more than one club is looking for a goalkeeper and while few, if any, would be tempted to part with \$12,000, Hellas would gain nothing by keeping him out of the game.



● Peter Laumets... looking for a new club.

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BULLEEN GO ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

STATE League newcomer, Bulleen Veneto, will give supporters a chance to weigh up its prospects of a good first season in top company.

The club will hold a social day at the Veneto Club, Bulleen Road, this Sunday, from 10am.

Coach Jimmy Rooney

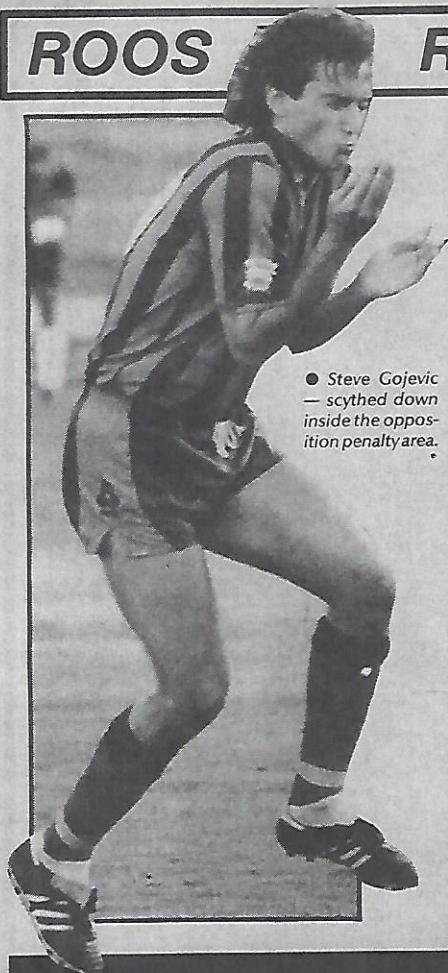
said: "It's a chance for all those connected with the club to have a look at the side and to get to know the players and committee."

Players will train in the

morning, have a break for lunch during which time a BBQ will be available, and then there will be a full scale practice game in the afternoon at 2pm.

ROOS

RANKED 184TH IN WORLD



● Steve Gojevic — scythed down inside the opposition penalty area.

GOOD morning. Welcome to Soccer Australia on your soccer network, Soccerama, on this day — Monday, February 4, in the year of Sir Arthur, 2002. Today's show is brought to you by Xientang Burgers of Toorak. Remember, Xientang puts bite into your burger...

Good news for Oz fans.

The national youth team moved a step closer to its aim of reaching the top four in world rankings. The 60 Grand Prix points gained for our 0-0 draw with Togo away from home puts us in fifth spot, behind world champion China, Zimbabwe, El Salvador and United Emirates. The Safeway Socceroos maintain their 184th ranking...

Promoter Jack Reilly confirmed overnight that the closed-circuit TV coverage of the Asian title clash between New Caledonia and Vanuatu would go ahead at the Olympicdome in Richmond on March 14 as planned. Originally, Reilly had made provision for 50 spectators to attend the game at \$2,000 a head but exhibition tennis, basketball, water polo and synchronised swimming events to be held at the nearby Flinders Park complex on the same night made access to one of the heliports impossible...

"We expect a decision any day now," was the confident claim of Heidelberg president Theo Selemidis.

The former Socceroo and Heidelberg star was commenting on the drawn out legal wrangle over Heidelberg's relegation from the now defunct National League way back in 1987...

The Victorian soccer world was buzzing yesterday with news that South Melbourne Hellas has offered two of its stars — Gary McCrowel and Charlia

Hellas starts to join Juve

Eager — in a package deal to Juventus.

South has placed a \$350,000 price tag on the duo and is throwing in two pairs of hardly used football boots, a training ball and a Denis Roussos compact disc...

TAKE A WALK ON THE DARK SIDE

ON A more sombre note, there is no truth in the rumour that SOCCER STAR's Gary Cutler has a dark side to his personality.

The front page picture of Gary in last week's issue was a cracker, wasn't it?

Maybe he was hoping that George Cross or Footscray would sign him.

WHAT! GROG IN THE PRESS BOX!

A RECENT NSL appointee was taken aback when he entered the Olympic Park Press box last week to discover yours truly and his colleagues squeezing the last drops of life out of some stubbies and a wee bottle of vodka.

The NSL man approached a high-ranking Olympic Park official about the affair and asked him to ban drinking in the Press box.

"How can they maintain their objectivity?" asked the NSL man of the Olympic Park official.

When was that ever an issue in soccer reporting?

MacKenzie AT LARGE

IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A PENALTY

NOW, I reckon that little John Stojkovic is a pretty good ref but I think that he erred last week in the Buffalo Cup semi between Makedonia and Heidelberg when he gave a free kick to Makedonia for an offence that I'm certain took place inside the arena.

Steve Gojevic broke through on the right of the Heidelberg area and was scythed down.

I'm sure that Gojevic was well inside the area when the infringement occurred.

And later in the game, John Anastasiadis scored a cracking goal after a superb solo run only to have it chalked off because Claude Lucchesi was offside.

Yes, Lucchesi was in an offside position, but was he interfering with play?

I didn't think so. There's no way he impeded or infringed upon Phil Trianides's view of the action. Trianides had his gaze fixed on Anastasiadis the second the Heidelberg teenager prepared to shoot.

I think the goal should have stood.

— Cragi MacKenzie

ANOTHER SIDE TO STEVENSON

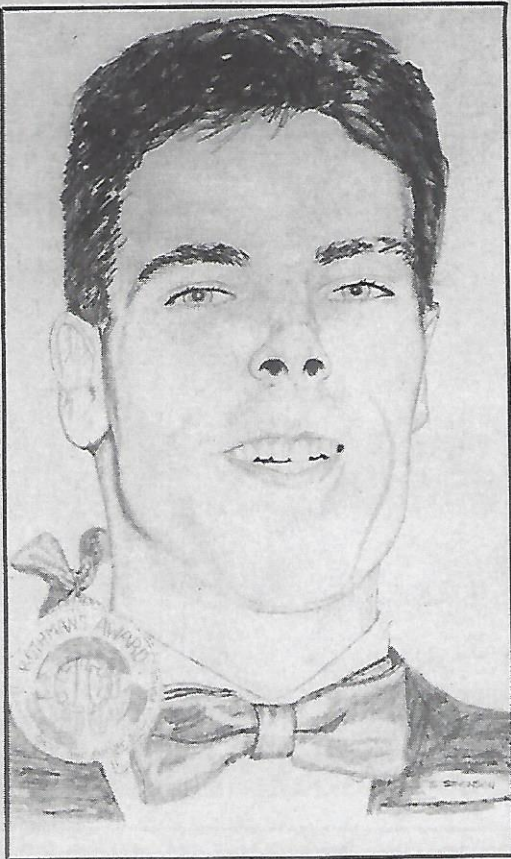
THERE's more to Stuart Stevenson than sharpness, aggression and ability on the soccer field.

This drawing of Socceroo and Brunswick Juventus star Andrew Zinni attests to that.

Stevenson, the former Heidelberg and Sydney Olympic striker currently transfer listed by South Melbourne has outstanding artistic flair.

Stevenson is available for caricature and sketching work and can be contacted through SOCCER STAR.


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Your Soccer Star pin-up picture of Dinamo Zagreb, 1988.



DINAMO ZAGREB, (back row, left to right): Dubravko Pavlicic, Miralem Ibrahimovic, Hari Skoro, Mustafa Aslanovic, Vlado Capljic, Marjan Vlak, Davor Matic, Damir Lesjak, Vlado Kasalao, Mirko Lulic.
Front Row: Slavko Istvanic, Drazan Besek, Stjepan Deveric, Mladen Munjakovic, Zjelko Cipan, Zoran Dimitrijevic, Zvonimir Boban, Mustafa Agic. Picture: Les Shorrock.

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BRUNSWICK JUVENTUS
v
FOOTSCRAY

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6
at OLYMPIC VILLAGE
K.O. 6 PM



ERNIE TAPAI



CON GIATAS

SOUTH MELBOURNE
v
MELBOURNE CROATIA

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7
at MIDDLE PARK
K.O. 6 PM



ALAN SCOTT

WOLLONGONG CITY v PRESTON MAKEDONIA
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7 at BRANDON PARK K.O. 5.30 pm

ST. GEORGE v ADELAIDE CITY
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7 at ST. GEORGE STADIUM K.O. 7.30 pm

SYDNEY CROATIA v SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7 at CROATIAN SPORTS CENTRE K.O. 7.00 pm

BRISBANE LIONS v MARCONI
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6 at RICHLANDS STADIUM K.O. 6 pm

APIA LEICHHARDT v SYDNEY OLYMPIC
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7 at WENTWORTH PARK K.O. 5 pm